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RE: CN RIGHT-OF-WAY VEGETATION CONTROL

Dear Mayor,

CN remains committed to running its railway sustainably, as well as building a level of trust and collaboration with the communities in which we operate.

To that end, we are reaching out to advise you of our vegetation control activities in your area between April and October 2023. A regularly updated schedule is available at:
[CN.ca/vegetation](https://www.cn.ca/vegetation)

If not managed properly, trees, brush or other vegetation can severely compromise rail and public safety. Vegetation can impede the view motorists have of oncoming trains and increase the risk of crossing accidents. Unwanted vegetation can damage the integrity of the railbed, interfere with signals and switches, contribute to track side fires, compromise employee and citizens safety, reduce visibility for train crews at road crossings/train control signals and track side warning devices, to name a few of the potential risks.

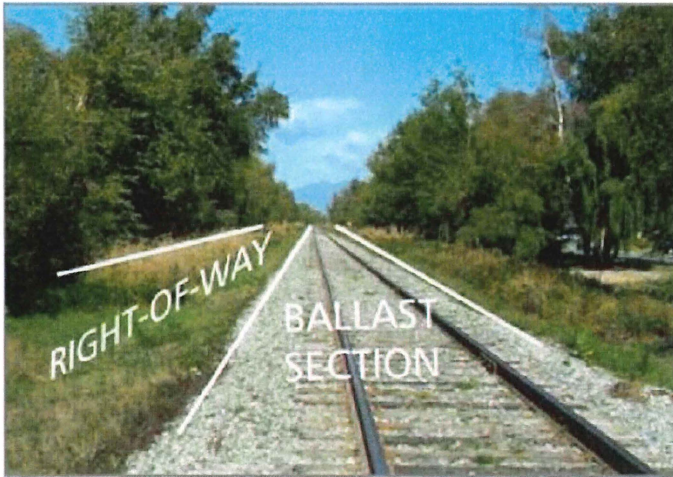
CN's annual vegetation control program is designed to mitigate these risks by managing brush, weeds, and other undesirable vegetation. This program is critical to ensure safe operations and contributes to the overall safety of your community.

Control Measures

CN manages vegetation using both chemical and mechanical methods. We are sensitive to concerns your community may have regarding chemical vegetation control and I would like to assure you that at CN, we strive to safeguard our neighbouring communities and the environment.

The track infrastructure is composed of two main sections, the ballast section typically ranging from 16-24 feet (which is primarily gravel and supports the track structure) and the right of way portion (which is the area outside of the ballast section to the CN property boundary).

The 16–24-foot ballast section and the areas around signals and communications equipment that are critical for safe railway operations will be managed using chemical methods. Application in these safety critical areas is done by spray trucks or spray trains with downcast nozzles that spray a short distance above the ground surface with shrouded booms, specially designed to limit the chemicals from drifting. The right-of-way section is maintained using mechanical control methods such as mowing, or brush cutting and may be chemically treated to control noxious or invasive weeds or brush.



CN will use chemical control techniques on the ballast section and specific locations of the right of way throughout the network for safety reasons. Furthermore, when chemicals are applied via spray train or truck, as outlined in the photo below, additives called surfactants are included to make the chemical work better.



CN has retained professional contractors qualified to undertake this work. They are required to comply with all laws and regulations applicable to CN. In addition, the contractors will ensure that vegetation control is performed with consideration of the environment and in accordance with the highest industry standards.

Inquiries

Should your community have any noxious weed removal requests, we ask that you contact CN's Public Inquiry Line at contact@cn.ca or fill out the form at [CN.ca/vegetation](https://www.cn.ca/vegetation) before June 1, 2023 with the specific information and location. CN will make every effort to include those locations as part of our 2023 Vegetation Management Program. All notices sent after the above-mentioned date will be included in the 2024 Vegetation Management Plan.

We look forward to working with you and answering any questions you may have regarding our vegetation control activities in your community.

Please find attached the notices CN is publishing in local papers to advise the public. We would kindly ask that you post copies on your community's website and at City Hall or other central locations for a wider distribution.

For any questions or more information, please contact the CN Public Inquiry Line by telephone at 1888-888-5909, or by email at contact@cn.ca.

Please also find attached a list of FAQs regarding the program that may be of further assistance.
Best regards,



Luanne Patterson



Annual Vegetation Management Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where can I get more information about CN's Vegetation Management Program?

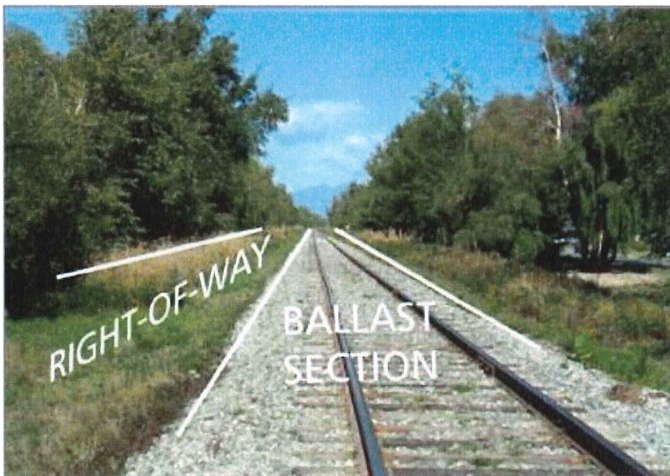
For more details, please visit our website at [CN.ca/vegetation](https://www.cn.ca/vegetation)

Why does CN need to remove vegetation along its train tracks annually?

At CN, safety is a core value. Part of maintaining and operating a safe railway is ensuring vegetation is managed along our corridors. CN also has an obligation, pursuant to the *Rules Respecting Track Safety*, adopted under the *Railway Safety Act*, to ensure that vegetation on or immediately adjacent to the railway roadbed is controlled. More specifically, the rules require federal railways to ensure the track is free of vegetation that could create fire hazards, affect the track integrity, or obstruct visibility of operations and inspections. Separate regulations also require removal of vegetation to ensure every grade crossing meets sightline requirements.

Where does CN remove vegetation?

For the purposes of vegetation control, CN divides its rail lines into two components: the ballast section and the right-of-way. The ballast section (gravelled area) covers a 16 to 24ft width (4.9 to 7.3m). The right-of-way section covers a 42ft width (13m) on each side of the ballast section.





Vegetation in the right-of-way section needs to be controlled to protect sight lines for train crews to see signal systems and at road crossings, prevent trees from fouling the track during storms, reduce fuel loading to prevent fires, minimize wildlife mortality, ensure good drainage along ditches and culverts, amongst other safety requirements and is primarily controlled mechanically, by mowing and cutting of vegetation. Certain herbicide products are used (excluding glyphosate) to encourage grass rather than shrubs and trees.

The ballast section, on the other hand, is the most critical area as it supports the track infrastructure that supports the movement of freight and passengers and provides an area for train crew to safely inspect their train. Given the crucial role it plays in ensuring the safety and integrity of rail operations, this section must be clear of all vegetation. The only proven way to effectively completely remove vegetation in the ballast section is through chemical application.



How will you manage dry plants that remain once the spraying is completed?

Ensuring vegetation is controlled on an annual basis is the best method to reduce larger volumes of dead and dry plants. This is because it eradicates vegetation before it grows, reducing the amount of dead plant material. CN's program has been developed specifically with this in mind. Most vegetation, once dead, will naturally decay leaving little debris. As for the right-of-way, the herbicides used are selective and the grass cover will remain intact while shrubs or noxious weeds will be controlled.

***What herbicides will CN be using?***

The choice of chemicals used depends on the specific plants targeted. All pesticides used in Canada are approved for use in Canada and the province in which they are applied. The chemicals for 2023 may include:

Name	Ingredient(s)	PCP #
Aspect	Picloram & 2,4-D	31641
Clearview	Aminopyralid & Metsulfuron-Methyl	29752
Credit Xtreme	Glyphosate	29888
Esplanade	Indaziflam 200g/l	31333
Milestone	Aminopyralid	28517
Navius Flex	Metsulfuron-Methyl & Aminocyclopyrachlor	3092228840 31333 32773 30203 30922 31470 31760 27736
Round Up Weather Pro	Glyphosate	27487
Hasten	Adjuvant	N/A
Gateway	Adjuvant	N/A

Will you be using Glyphosate. If so, is it dangerous for us or my pets?

All pesticides CN uses in Canada are registered by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and have been approved for use in the province in which they are applied. Protection of human health and the environment is Health Canada's primary objective in the regulation of pesticides and all pesticides must undergo rigorous science-based assessments before being approved for sale in Canada. The PMRA also re-evaluates registered pesticides on a cyclical basis to ensure they continue to meet modern health and environmental standards. The PMRA re-evaluated glyphosate in 2017 and reconfirmed that products containing glyphosate do not present risks to human health or the environment when used in accordance with revised label directions. CN's vegetation control contractor uses glyphosate in accordance with label directions.



Has CN tried any non-chemical weed control options in the past, such as weed whacking? Have they worked?

CN has used weed cutting in the past to control vegetation, but this does not remove the roots, and actually encourages more growth. It is not an effective long-term solution for vegetation removal along railway tracks. The application of steam injection has also been investigated; however, it has proven ineffective in killing the roots, which, if left to continue growing, could compromise the integrity of the rail bed, causing unsafe operating conditions.

CN has also explored other options, such as high concentrate vinegar (acetic acid). However, this was deemed not to be a viable option as the acid reacts negatively with steel and the sensitive electronic monitoring equipment used to regulate the safe movement and operation of our trains.

I am an organic farmer adjacent to your tracks, should I be worried?

Most of the vegetation control focuses on the ballast section (gravelled area) which is 16 – 24 feet (4.9 to 7.3 meters) wide, leaving about 42 feet (13 meters) of right-of-way on each side of the ballast. The equipment used for application is a shrouded boom which focuses the spray downward to reduce potential drift. Application must also be done during appropriate weather conditions, including low wind levels.

Many properties back onto the railway. Are Aspect, Clearview, Credit Xtreme, Esplanade, Milestone, Navius Flex, Round Up Weather Pro, Hasten, and Gateway safe to use in close proximity to people and pets?

All pesticides used in Canada must be registered by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), which has one of the toughest regulatory requirements in the world for approving products for safe use. CN only uses pesticides that have been approved for use in Canada and the province in which they are applied. When used according to label directions, PMRA has evaluated them to be safe.

Can I request my area not be sprayed?

At CN, safety is a core value. CN is governed by the Railway Safety Act and must comply with the laws and regulations. Vegetation control is a key component of keeping our employees and the communities in which we operate safe. Ensuring vegetation is kept clear of our infrastructure, signals, road crossing sight lines and enabling our teams to inspect and maintain the track is critically important. As a result, all areas of the CN ballast section will be treated to control vegetation.